DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 200 375 RC 012 614

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TITLE One School's Positive Action Plan.
INSTITUTION Jefferson County School District 509-J, Madras, Oreg.
PUB DATE Mar 81
NOTE 17p.

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Behavioral Objectives; *Behavior Change; Discipline Policy; Elementary Education; Grade 1; Grade 2; Grade 3; Grade 4; *Incentives; *Individual Development; *Positive Reinforcement; Rewards; Rural Schools; Self Actualization; *Self Control; Self Evaluation (Individuals); Small Schools; Student Evaluation
IDENTIFIERS Oregon

ABSTRACT

Because they felt that students can be responsible for their own behavior, the staff of Jefferson Elementary School, serving 300 students in grades 1 through 4 in a small rural community, developed a program which promoted self-management. In September 1979, teachers participated in an assertive discipline workshop. A Positive Action Plan evolved, designed to foster consistency in classroom and cafeteria and on the school grounds. A formal written program was shared with parents the following September and then went into effect. Teachers provided positive information to parents at least every other week. Children were given immediate rewards for positive behavior; teachers wrote them "love notes," took them on short walking field trips, or gave them small prizes. Monthly assemblies rewarded those who had behaved appropriately. Students who demonstrated appropriate behavior most of the time could apply to become self-managers. If they answered "almost always" to a checklist of 26 items and their teachers agreed, with 2 other staff members supplying supportive signatures, certificates and gold self-manager buttons were awarded. Consequences for improper behavior were consistent but flexible. The plan, which improved relationships of students, parents, staff, and townspeople, was evaluated and rewritten after a year. The rewritten plan and a self-manager application are appended. (CM)

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ONE SCHOOL'S

POSITIVE ACTION PLAN

BY

Sammie McCormack

Principal

JEFFERSON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
615 N. 2nd St.
Jefferson, Oregon

March 1981

RC 012614

U S DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
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Sammie McCormack

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

Today, something wonderful happened! As I watched children walk, not run, to recess, about a fourth of them stopped to talk to me. They were so excited that each could hardly wait for a turn to share the news with me -- but, without any direction from me, each did wait.

"I only have two more to get my self-manager's", "We got the sportsmanship trophy this week", "I finished the math race today", "Judy gets her Self-Manager button today", "We're going to play Soccer", "Our team won our first game last night", and so the comments continued until each had shared. Isn't it wonderful that each student wanted to share something positive with the principal? These were not selfish comments, but were instead comments of self worth. I could see clearly the results of a program begun at the start of the school year in 1979.

Jefferson Elementary School serves 300 plus students in grades one through four. We are a small rural community which feels that education is of high priority.

In September of 1979, the staff met to develop a school philosophy that students can be and are responsible for their own behavior. We built a program promoting self-management. That fall, about 75% of the teachers participated in an assertive discipline workshop. As the year progressed, we felt that these two programs, as we used them, provided the nucleus for a school-wide Positive Action Plan. In the spring of 1980, we began the evaluation process and committee work which would lead us to that goal.

The Positive Action Plan which evolved, acknowledged a need for building consistancy in the classroom, cafeteria, playground, bus loading area, and generally at all times on the school grounds. A committee consisting of two teachers per grade level, two teaching aides, a custodian, a cook, and special program teacher worked to develop a building program. Once finalized, we produced a formal, written program, ready to share with parents in September. What follows is a description of what we have done so far.

Discipline: The entire staff spent one day of the Fall 1980 inservice days, reviewing Canter's "Assertive Discipline". The building rules were reviewed, and techniques which would be consistent from custodian to teacher were developed. Teachers then planned or reviewed room rules, and both positive and negative consequences were developed. We felt that the cafeteria provided a unique situation which can either be pleasant or a disaster. We extended school rules to cafeteria behavior, and enlarged the positive consequences (see positives). Each week we now discuss a cafeteria problem during our all-staff meeting, and decide upon a "manner of the week" which is then taught and emphasized in the classroom. One aide or teacher supervises the cafeteria during lunch, while students sit together as a class. Other staff members are then able to enjoy a duty-free lunch time.

During the first week of school, teachers informed students of our expectations, and students shared, drew posters, and did some role playing of appropriate behavior. The second week of school was the time previously decided upon to inform parents. We sent copies of our Positive Action Plan home and asked that parents

sign an acknowledgement statement indicating that they had read about the program. Teachers continued to reinforce appropriate behavior and actions. At the end of the week we held an all-school assembly to review "in-mass" our five school rules, and both the positive and negative consequences which would occur. The staff felt that this was the best time for the Principal to take a strong stand on the expectations and consequences.

All school rules and programs went into effect with the beginning of the week number three.

Positive Consequences:

Classroom: One of our continuing building goals is to provide positive information (notes, phone calls or conferences) to the parents of each child a minimum of once every other week. Most teachers do this weekly, and some even daily. We all send "love notes" to the children when we see things positive happen. "I saw you being good today!", "Thank you for helping Mary on the playground", "Taking turns on the swings was very nice", "You did your best to get your math done today", and even "John learned how to hang up his coat today" are not uncommon notes received by our children (and then taken home). In addition, teachers have started to use the lunch hour, or recess time to have a walking field trip (with parent written permission) with one or two children to the nearby Snappy Freeze, where the child may buy a small ice cream cone. One teacher keeps a cookie jar on her desk, which parents take turns keeping filled. Another keeps a jar of colorful erasers. Children earn the opportunity to "dip in". Still another uses Canter's marble jar where students earn marbles in the jar with on task behavior and if the jar is filled at the end of the week, the nutrition lesson on Friday involves

preparation of food by the Self Managers for the whole class to eat. Needless to say, the list is endless of the positives which teachers can and do use. The important thing is that we feel that we need to immediately identify to the child when appropriate behavior or achievement takes place -- this reinforcement must out-weigh and out-number acknowledgement of misbehavior or refusal to complete class work!!

Cafeteria: Each lunch period all classes sit together at tables which already have "super table" trophies displayed. These trophies indicate that the class follows the expectations of the cafeteria. The atmosphere is one of quiet conversation, and restaurant-like in behavior. If a student is unable to follow the rules, that student is asked by the supervisor to move the trophy from the table to a storage area. However, for each day the trophy remains in place, the class receives a mark. Five consecutive days of marks results in all students in the class receiving a ticket good for one free bag of popcorn. This process is repeated each time the class has five consecuitive days.

We have found that our students were, however, accumulating popcorn tickets faster than our every-other-week popcorn sales could accomodate. We have now extended the popcorn ticket into a medium of exchange, with the cooperation of community businesses. Personal contacts, first on the phone, and then in person, resulted in donations of hundreds of certificates good for ice cream cones, pieces of pie, french fries, cokes, gum, candy, and even some full dinners. Now we open our "store" once a week before school when students may exhange "two popcorn tickets for one 25¢ ice cream cone certificate", "four popcorn tickets for a delux hamburger coupon",

"six popcorn tickets for a pizza coupon", "three popcorn tickets for a free skating pass" and the like. Our merchants feel that each of these donations has a pay-off to them far beyond what we see at school in positive behavior.

Playground and Bus (and school in general): Initially we felt that once each grading quarter we should have an assembly for those who demonstrate appropriate behavior during that period. Then we changed in November to once each month because the feeling was that grades 1 through 4 need more frequent reinforcement. The assemblies range from movies to performances by high school students (as long as we are able to do it at no cost). In addition, each student who participates recieves an "I am a Special Person" award which may be taken home.

Self-Managers: Students who demonstrate appropriate behavior almost all of the time, both within and outside of the classroom, may apply to their teachers to become Self-managers. The student and teacher sit down to discuss a check list of 26 items which relate to classroom management skills, respect for others and respect of self. If the student can answer "almost always" to all 26 items, and the teacher agrees, the student then seeks supportive signatures from two other staff members (one of whom is the cafeteria supervisor). Each Friday we award gold buttons to our new Self-Managers which are worn proudly here at school, and also certificates for them to take home.

Other: Without reference to previous problems, children can earn the opportunity to do something special not only with the teacher but also with the school counselor (make puppets, draw, etc.), the

music teacher (play a special instrument, learn a new folk dance, etc.), or the principal (read together, or just share good times). We feel that this way the child who may have had some problems still can receive the motivation and reward for appropriate behavior.

Negative Consequences: In all instances consequences are consistent, yet have the flexibility to fit the behavior demonstrated. We notify parents by phone, and we inform the child immediately. The child is also given immediate opportunity to change the behavior to that which is expected.

Classroom: (What follows is a sample of what one teacher may use)

1 - 5 Minutes time out in the classroom

2 - 10 minutes time out in location other than classroom

3 - 30 minutes time out, and a call to parents.

4 - Written behavioral referral to principal

4.01 in-house suspension

4.02 phone call home from principal

4.03 parent conference

Playground: (This is our actual process)

1 - Detention area for one recess

2 - Detention area for one recess and parents notified by phone.

3 - Detention area for all recesses for one week and parents notified by phone.

4 - Detention area and loss of recess until parent conference when appropriate consequences are agreed upon.

5 - SEVERE - written referral to principal, with same options as outlined under classroom.

The results: In addition to students demonstrating that they are proud of their own success -- and each has many opportunities to succeed on a variety of levels -- staff members are helping each other feel good about our success. Not only do the students tell me about "what's right", but also the staff is quick to point that out. One of our classified staff members told me today that she has noticed a distinct difference in a colleague since she and others began to tell the colleague how much they appreciate how hard she works, and how much her friendship means to them. We no longer assume that others know "what's right" and only tell them "what's wrong" -- we TELL each other, and we SHOW each other.

The Positive Action Plan works. It has improved relations with the students, parents, staff and those townspeople who have no connection to school. There is no extra cost to the school district, which everyone appreciates. It is a real pleasure to be in this building, not only for us, but also for our students, parents and community members who frequently visit.

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APR 1981

POSITIVE ACTION PLAN

PREPARED BY:

THE JEFFERSON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL STAFF

SAMMIE MCCORMACK
PRINCIPAL

1980-81

PREFACE

Because the staff at Jefferson Elementary School felt in September of 1979 that students can be and are responsible for their own behavior, we developed a program promoting self-management. As the 1979-1980 year progressed and staff participated in an "assertive discipline" workshop, the self-management nucleus, materialized into the need for a school-wide discipline program.

After one year of implementation, we have new re-evaluated and re-written the program. We present now the school-wide Positive Action Plan which we will use in 1980-81.

POSITIVE ACTION PLAN

At Jefferson Elementary, we believe a student is in the formative years of assuming increasing responsibility for his/her behavior. A set of guidelines has been developed which emphasize appropriate behavior. We feel that students must have the freedom and encouragement to manage themselves, under our guidance of course, so they can become responsible for their actions and develop maturity in thinking and judgement.

The goal of school wide, general rules is to establish a systematic plan for promoting responsible behavior by all students. It will be the responsibility of all staff working with students to provide the necessary follow through to allow student choice of appropriate school behavior. The person in charge of playground, cafeteria, halls must assume students are responsible for their own actions and can accept the consequences of their choices, positive or negative.

Good examples set by staff and students and the harmony created by appropriate behavior will provide the best learning and social enviroment possible for our students. It is our goal to establish at the earliest possible age, an understanding that we alone are responsible for our actions and the consequences they bring.

the following are our General School Rules:

1. Keep hands, feet, and objects to yourself.
2. Follow directions the first time.
3. Use playground and equipment appropriately.
4. Walk quietly to and from all activities.
5. Treat others and their property with kindness and respect.

Consequences:

Positive:
Consequences that will occur if students behave appropriately i.e., follow the school rules and receive no pink slips.

1. End of nine week period-Assembly for a movie or special program.
2. Ribbon award "I'm a Special Person", for each student attending the assembly.

Negative:
Consequences that will occur if student breaks school rules. If student breaks a rule he/she will be given a pink slip. Each grading period will start a new cumulation of Pink Slips. Detention areas will be marked on playgroud.

1st pink slip - sent to detention area at recess break
2nd pink slip - detention area and parents called by homeroom teacher.
3rd pink slip - detention area, teacher calls parents-no yard play for 5 days.
4th pink slip - detention and conference with teacher, with appropriate consequences.

Severe Clause - Immediately go to principal with behavioral referral conference with principal, parent, teacher and student with appropriate consequences.

BECOMING A SELF-MANAGER

A student may choose to evaluate his/her behavior with respect to the guidelines. If a student rates himself/herself in the "almost always" column and the homeroom teacher and most significant staff members agree, a special button will be awarded the student.

This button is entitled "Jefferson Self-Manager" and bears the student's name. It entitles the student to privileges described later.

All students will have an opportunity to earn this special button as they demonstrate they can manage their own behavior in the following ways. (See "Jefferson Self - Management Application").

While the staff promotes positive reinforcement of acceptable behavior, unacceptable behaviors may occur and the student must accept responsibility for his/her actions.

All students are expected to follow all guidelines listed on the application.

SPECIFICS OF THE SELF-MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

1. Introduction to self-management program

   Sept. - In-class discussing and understanding of what "is" a self-manager. Students learn the behavior skills listed on checklist.
   - Class discussions
   - Role playing
   - Wall charts, bulletin boards, pictures, etc., to stimulate discussions

2. Self-evaluation

   Each child will complete a behavior checklist, to be used by the child as a self-evaluation. This evaluation may also be a "starting point" toward a self-management award.

3. Steps to self-management

After self-evaluation, the child may apply to be a self-manager. The child meets with the homeroom teacher and together they complete the self-management checklist. At this time, the additional signatures needed will be discussed. Conferences with the homeroom teacher will continue periodically until all checks are in the "almost always" column. Additional signatures may then be obtained for final approval.

4. Rewards

Buttons and certificates will be awarded by the principal every Friday during the last five minutes of the lunch time.

5. Conferences

Conferences held at times arranged with the homeroom teacher (at breaks, quiet time during seatwork, "walking students" after school, use of aide time, when available or scheduled). These conferences are requested by the student.

6. Buttons

Buttons will be made with space in which to place the child's name. They will not be taken home, but kept in a special place in each home room area. The child may take the button home at the end of the year.

7. Loss of button

Button can be removed in the following way

A) Showing lack of follow thru on self-management responsibilities.
B) Abusing special privileges.
C) Doing something dangerous or harmful to themselves or others.

When a child loses his/her badge for the first time, the adult who took the button will give it to the homeroom teacher followed by a conference or information exchange between the persons involved. This will take place as soon as possible (within a one-day period) to explain why the badge was taken. The button may be restored at the end of the conference.

A second violation will result in the loss of the button for one week and another adult-pupil conference.

A third violation will result in the loss of the button for two weeks. At the end of that period the child will have an opportunity to reapply for another button.

8. Certificates

Upon receiving a button, the child will also receive a certificate to take home telling of his/her accomplishment.

9. Possible privileges

--- first in line
--- room pencil sharpener
--- run filmstrip projector
--- lead pledge of allegiance
--- access to extra art supplies
--- getting to choose a new place to sit
--- sitting at teacher's desk
--- picking the class story
--- dismissed first
--- help check papers
--- coke downtown
--- visit another classroom
--- help custodian
--- 15 extra minutes in library
--- use tape recorder
--- messenger for office
--- having a beverage with someone at school
--- being a teacher helper
--- do a bulletin board with teacher
--- free bag of popcorn at sale

Once a month a reward will be provided for each child wearing a self-manager button. If a button is maintained for 9 weeks, the child's picture will be taken with the principal and put up for display.

10. Caution

It would be easy for staff to set kids up for failure by approving some who really don't exhibit the kind of behavior expected. Be strong enough to say "No"! Give reasons why you feel you cannot endorse a child. Help a student to understand what needs to be done to correct the deficiencies.

Don't ignore obvious or repeated violations of Jefferson self-management behavior but also, don't remove a badge for every minor violation observed. Hopefully, considered judgements will result in basic adherence to the high standards that we desire, but will not result in a rash of buttons being taken for infrequent, minor infractions.

JEFFERSON SELF-MANAGER APPLICATION

NAME _____ 1. HOMEROOM TEACHER _____

2. _____

3. _____

Date Awarded _____

Almost Always	Working on it		
			CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT SKILLS
_____	_____	1.	I can go from one place to another without a problem.
_____	_____	2.	I am a good listener and try to understand.
_____	_____	3.	I follow directions.
_____	_____	4.	I am ready for work on time.
_____	_____	5.	I do my work as well as I can.
_____	_____	6.	I do my work on time.
_____	_____	7.	I can work with a small group.
_____	_____	8.	I am able to wait patiently.
_____	_____	9.	I can work alone.
_____	_____	10.	Use playground & equipment appropriately.
_____	_____	11.	I can take care of myself even when people are not watching.
_____	_____	12.	I use a quiet voice in the building.
			RESPECT FOR PROPERTY, SELF, AND OTHERS
_____	_____	13.	I cooperate with other people.
_____	_____	14.	I take care of school materials.
_____	_____	15.	I take care of my things.
_____	_____	16.	I return things I use to the proper place.
_____	_____	17.	I respect the property of others.
_____	_____	18.	I do not waste time in the bathroom.
_____	_____	19.	I go to and from school without problems.
_____	_____	20.	I come to school on time.
_____	_____	21.	I use good manners while eating lunch.
_____	_____	22.	Keep hands, feet and other objects to myself.
			HELPING OTHERS
_____	_____	23.	I don't hurt other people.
_____	_____	24.	I am helpful to others.
_____	_____	25.	I return things that I find to the proper owner or to the lost and found.
_____	_____	26.	I am a good sport; I play fair and follow game rules.

Note: To receive a self-manager's button, all check marks must be in the "almost always" column, as verified by the teacher.

DEAR PARENT - PLEASE SIGN THIS STATEMENT AFTER READING ABOUT OUR PROGRAM, AND RETURN IT IMMEDIATELY TO SCHOOL WITH YOUR SON/ DAUGHTER.

DATE:_____

I HAVE READ THE POSITIVE ACTION PLAN MATERIALS.

_____
Parent signature

_____
Name of Student

_____
Name of classroom teacher